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on the determination of azimuth follows it. The book closes with a very full and clear setting-forth of the subjects of precession, nutation, aberration, and proper-motion, with the formulæ for their application, and a set of tables most useful to the field-astronomer in reducing observations.

The most valuable and characteristic feature of the book is the excellent series of examples taken from actual modern practice, which accompany almost every method of using each instrument, and are fully discussed by the method of least-squares where its application is advantageous. There is throughout an endeavor to impress the importance of developing the degree of accuracy inherent in the observations, and the best methods of avoiding or eliminating systematic errors. The whole work bespeaks the thorough master of his subject. The warning as to parts of the normal-equations solution not checked by the proof-formulæ, the giving of the complete values of the auxiliaries in the formulæ for the weight-coefficients out to four unknown quantities, and many other points which would be overlooked by the mere book-maker or pure theorist, show that Professor Doolittle has thoroughly beaten the whole ground, and knows where the difficulties lie.

The typography of the book is excellent, and Professor Doolittle's known thoroughness gives us assurance that much less than the usual number of mistakes will be found in the printed text.

MEXICAN ETHNOLOGY.

THE magnificent ethnologic museum of the Trocadéro at Paris is one of the sights of that great capital which no scientific visitor should overlook. It is particularly rich in its American department, and the conservator of the museum, Dr. Hamy, has taken a pride not only in collecting in this department, but in studying his specimens and in publishing the results of his studies. As editor of the excellent *Révue d'ethnographie* he has always at his command a medium to give them promptly to the world. He has collected a number of these studies under the title, 'Decades Americanæ.' They treat of such topics as 'An anthropolith from Guadelupe,' 'Fishing industry in ancient times in the Californian Archipelago,' 'The Tzompantli,' 'An Aztec arrangement for supporting skulls,' 'The American solar wheel,' 'A pipe from King's Mound, Ashland,' etc. All these articles are

Mission scientifique au Mexique et dans l'Amérique Centrale. Anthropologie du Mexique. Par M. E.-T. HAMY. Paris, Imprimerie nationale, 1884. 4°.

Decades Americanæ. Mémoires d'archéologie et d'ethnographie Américaines. Par le Dr. E.-T. HAMY. Paris, 1884.

freely illustrated, and the specimens are described and discussed with clearness and from an astonishing width of special reading.

The 'Anthropology of Mexico' is a work of much more ambitious character. In this large and handsome quarto published by the French government, Dr. Hamy discusses the human remains that have been collected by French explorers in various portions of Mexico. He places them in relation with the oldest relics of the stone age from the same region, and reaches the conclusion that the implements, at any rate, point to a period and condition of human life exactly the same as existed in the United States and Europe during the epoch of unpolished stone. In the crania examined the principal characteristics were marked prognathism and brachycephalism. These traits the author thinks are especially pronounced in the skulls of the Otomis and Mazahuas. Besides the minute descriptions and abundant lithographic illustrations with which he enlightens his topic, he enters somewhat fully into the earliest legendary history of Mexican ethnography, attempting to define more closely the identity and relations of those mysterious people, the Quinamies, the Olmecs, and the Xicalancos. He wisely, however, treads with caution on this very uncertain ground.

ASTRONOMICAL NOTES.

Longitude signals between St. Louis and Mexico. — Professor H. S. Pritchett, director of the observatory of the Washington university at St. Louis, kindly communicates the results of a longitude campaign between his observatory and the Observatorio nacional de Mexico, Sr. A. Anguiano, director. A preliminary discussion gives $35^{\circ} 57' .25$ as the difference of longitude, or $6^{\circ} 36' 46' .41$ W. of Greenwich as the resulting longitude of the transit-circle piers of the Mexican observatory. This differs $5' .0$ from the old value determined by moon-culminations. The circuit was 2583 miles long, with five repeaters, and the armature time was quite constant, averaging $0' .38$. The outfit of the Mexican national observatory includes a 15-inch equatorial by Grubb, and an 8-inch meridian-circle, and a 6-inch transit, both by Troughton and Simms. The personnel consists of the director (Sr. Anguiano) and five assistants.

Comet observations at Greenwich. — The somewhat unusual appearance in the *Astronomische Nachrichten* (2688) of comet-observations communicated by the astronomer-royal attracts our attention, and we trust this is only the beginning of a continuous series. One point, we think, is worth noting. As communicated, they give the meas-